



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

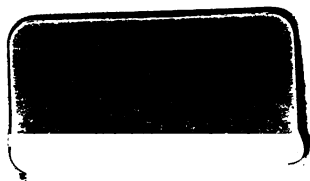
About Google Book Search

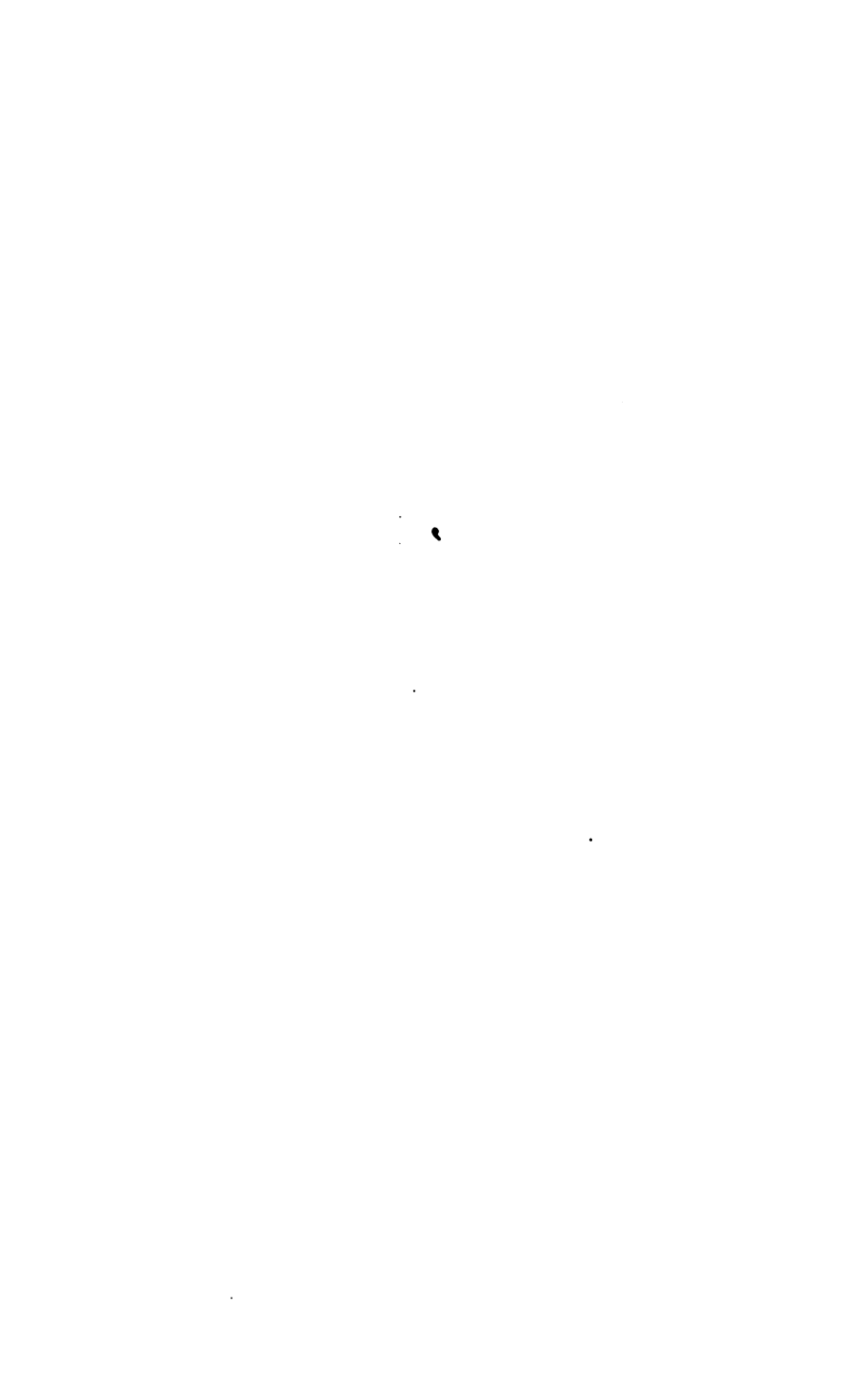
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



THE
ANT PRINCE

47.1709.







THE ANT PRINCE.

THE ANT PRINCE

A RHYME

BY

FANNY STEERS

SECOND EDITION



LONDON
WILLIAM PICKERING
1847

TO
LADY CARMICHAEL

THIS RHYME IS
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

BY
HER GRATEFUL FRIEND

FANNY STEERS.



THE ANT PRINCE.

ERRATUM.

Page 24, line 14, *read quiet instead of quite.*

I In mood abstracted ;
 And, before I tell
 Of what then befell,
I beg that my tale ye'll true believe,
And not as mere invention receive
 Of brain distracted.

'Twas, as I've said, in the summer time,
And I strayed in a grove of chestnut and lime,
Which, from their blossoms, threw fragrance
around ;
In sooth, 'twas an evening, balmy, delicious,
But, as odours, like othersweet things, are pernicious,
The scent of these blossoms caused languor
profound ;
So, with faintness opprest,
I sank down to rest.
And oh ! what a bank of beauty was there !
The flowrets how lovely, the mosses how rare !
To musing propitious :
Then, that perfume delicious—
The trees still exhaled it,
And I still inhaled it,
Till my thoughts became gloomy, approaching to
tragic,
When, all of a sudden, and almost like magic,
My spirit was roused by a marvellous sound,
Which, though truly unearthly, came up from the
ground.

'Twas not chirping, nor humming,
Nor buzzing, nor drumming,
Nor mewing, nor purring,
Nor animal stirring,
Nor air current rushing,
Nor water spring gushing,
Nor any sound local;
Far less was it thunder,
For my feet it seemed under;
And—matter of wonder!

'Twas certainly vocal.

The tone was, though masculine, gentle and mild,
Yet it was not the voice of bird or of child,
But, like that of conscience, so still and so small,
That it greatly resembled nothing at all.

You now may suppose that I looked well about me,
And, close by my side—though perhaps you may
doubt me—

At last I perceived, in a sort of a chink,
And stretched at full length—why, what do you
think?

'Twas no less than an Ant, and not any thing bigger,
 Who mournful was lying,
 Apparently dying,
With face black as jet, and attenuate figure.
 A bonnet and plume on his head he wore,
 And his mien, though dejected, was royal ;
And, bright on his breast, an order he bore,
 For deeds right brave and loyal.
His half-closed eye betrayed no sign
 Of heeding things external,
But anon a glance, although benign,
 Gave symptoms of fire internal.
Small was his mouth ; for ears I sought,
 But was too much confused to find them ;
As methinks, the amative organ ought
 To have been developed behind them.
And, by his side, with gossamer strung,
 A fairy guitar was lying,
And sometimes he murmured, and sometimes
 he sung,
In a kind of melodious sighing.

With a plaintive entrada his strain began,
And his voice was full of emotion ;
I've noted the words, to try if I can
Give, of insect lyrics, a notion.

SONG.

Pianissimo, quasi estinto.

Vainly the streamlet ripples by,
Vainly the sunbeams shine,
They may give gladness to human eye,
But they bring no joy to mine.

Vainly the dewdrops glisten near,
Vainly the branches wave ;
The dewdrop, alas ! resembles a tear,
And the turf I lie on, a grave.

Oh ! hopeless love can all things blight,
Can pleasure turn to pain,
And brightest day is drear as night
To hearts that sigh in vain.

Thus far, of a truth, I saw and heard,
And—hold me not in derision—
But the rest of my story, I give you my word
Was revealed in mesmeric vision.

To my inward sight it was forthwith shown,
That 'mong Ants this bard was prince,
And a poet so wonderful I've never known,
Either before or since.

Now straightway, to see him, an insect friend
Of noble bearing came,
Who begged that his highness would condescend
His secret wo to name.
Here the face of the Ant so dismal grew,
That with pity my heart did ache;
And then such a marvellous sigh he drew,
That it made the leaflets shake.
When gracefully raising his princely head,
To his visiter kind, he faintly said :

“ Friend, I am not at thy wish displeased
For my thoughts are sad, not sinister ;
But, think'st thou, that unto ‘ a mind diseased,’
Friendship can aught administer?
For more than a day I've borne this anguish,
Yet time seems only my wo to strengthen,
And oh ! what an age it is to languish,
When, long though it be, it seems likely to
lengthen !”

“ Trust me, O Prince, 'twould thy pain alleviate
If to thy servant thou wouldst confess it,
And greatly the effort of speaking abbreviate
If thou wouldst permit thy servant to guess it.
I vow then, by all the powers above,
That I venture to name but what every one sees,
It is, that your highness is dying for love
Of that sovereign haughty, the Queen of the Bees.”

“ Thou hast then named her !” the Ant Prince
cried,
With energy sudden rising,
“ And my secret from thee no more will I hide,
Since thou'st guessed it with truth surprising.

Yes! thou hast named her! a spell in the sound
Makes with fire electric my pulses thrill;
So subtle, so burning, and oh! so profound
That each nerve in my frame is vibrating still."

Here, said the friend, as one oft does apart,
" Ah! Prince undone! depend upon it,
Whether or no there is one in your heart,
No one can doubt there's a Bee in your bonnet."
But he did not e'en look this thought abrupt,
Much less his highness interrupt;
So the Prince with the theme became excited,
And his story of love he thus recited.

END OF FYTTE THE FIRST.

FYTTE THE SECOND.

“**D**OST thou not know a rose-tree fair
Which of my park the pride is?
I cherish it more for its beauty rare,
For its flowers of colour beyond compare,
Than merely to feed Aphides.
Mid its petals, at noon, I oft recline,
Absorbed in meditation ;
Musing on Nature’s works divine,
Sometimes planning a few of mine
In earnest cogitation.
Sometimes my thoughts on gardening dwell,
From pines to the potato ;
Anon, it suits my spirit well
To read a page of Plato.

I ponder then on man, the prime,
In mind and frame gigantic ;
Review, with awe, his thoughts sublime,
With sighs, his doings frantic.
And, musing thus, one sultry hour
I heard a fluttering near—
I turned, impelled by secret power
Of wonder, not of fear ;
And close upon a neighbouring spray,
A beauteous form my homage claimed,
Chasing all other thoughts away—
For it was she whom thou hast named !
Never did object meet my sight,
Of grace so exquisite before :
The spray seemed trembling with delight,
But my heart trembled more.
On her honey-dust search she seemed intent,
While I gazed on supinely ;
Then, poising her wings, on high she went,
Humming a tune divinely.
They say she bears a secret dart,
The wound of which is grievous,

And if her mien thus touch the heart,
Her sting may well of life bereave us.”
Here paused the Prince, whereon his friend,
For aught like a reply perplexed,
And wondering how it all would end,
Made this remark unique—“what next?”
“Of incident, my tale, oh friend! has little,
For slightest things a flame will nourish,
Love’s chains are fine, would they were brittle,
That I again in peace might flourish!
There’s since a fascination in the air
Of that loved spot where first we met,
And often do I linger there
Until the glaring sun is set;
Then comes the soft and pensive hour,
Dearer than light to lover’s eyes,
When fades the present, past has power,
Or visions of the future rise.
And yester e’en the moon was beaming
Feeding my heart with fancies bitter—
But can it be? or am I dreaming?
Or did I really hear thee titter?”

“ Pardon, O Prince ! such strange ill breeding,
Thy love could nought but pity raise ;
If then, of forms I’ve been unheeding,
’Twas when the moon thou sought’st to praise,
I cannot hear her name unmoved—
Though dark we’d be if we had lost her,
Fancies fond she well may foster,
Lovers with homage may accost her,
Saints by her light say Paternoster,
But that colossus, Rosse, has proved,
That the bright moon is an imposter.
To poets’ eyes her beams illusive
Have been a source of consolation,
But Science, with her gaze intrusive
Finds her an orb of desolation.”

“ Let meddling Science peep and pry,
She shall not blot my star-lit sky,
And while Heaven’s mystic beauty dies
For poring men, and sneering flies,
The pale moon, and the light she grants,
Must still be dear to lowly Ants.”

Now to the friend—himself a fly,
There seemed rebuke in this reply ;
He therefore said, “ Do not resent
That laugh, of which I now repent,
Nor give it, Prince, such harsh requital
As not to finish your recital.”
So the Prince smiled, with great benignity,
And recommenced—not without dignity.

“ The moon, Sir Fly, was shining brightly—
Let truths irrelevant no more be broached ;
When faltering, near me, hovering lightly,
The object of my love approached.
Such joy, such hope the sight imparted,
That, rapture-stricken, up I started,
Advancing with delight to meet her,
And with ecstatic welcome greet her.
But she said coolly—‘ Do not mind me,
My brain, just now, is on the rack ;
This morn I left my sting behind me,
And now, to seek it, am come back.’

“ Search ’mid the rose leaves then no more,
O beauteous Queen, that dart of thine,
For now I know—I feared before—
’Tis buried in this heart of mine.
Whereat she smiled—’twere vain to doubt it—
And smiling, made this calm reply :
‘ In that case, Prince, I’ll do without it,
Or may withdraw it by and by.’
I knelt, I prayed her to relieve me,
But she still said with pleased disdain,
‘ P’rhaps, by and by,’—and then, believe me,
Flew gaily to her hive again.”
Here did the Prince cease his narration,
With sorrow and fatigue subdued ;
Here did the Fly his reprobation
Of the queen’s cruel freak intrude.
“ And in her hive may she remain !
There to make honey workers teach,
For, from her conduct strange, ’tis plain
There’s little of it in her speech.
In truth, her laughter light and pert,
Suits less the sovereign than the flirt.

Nathless, with prudent sway she reigns,
And public favour well maintains :
She's thought a queen of great propriety,
Of judgment sound, and fervent piety ;
Of morals taking so much care,
That few to do glaring wrong may dare ;
And, if even a drone be led astray,
Most touching and solemn things she'll say,
And read him a sermon with so much unction,
That preaching seems her natural function.
But she can not only preach a sermon,
She learned is, and studies German ;
And though, by some, it has been suspected
That English and Shakspeare are both neglected,
Goëthe and Schiller she's read all through,
And Hegel and Kant, and Jean Paul too ;
Of Niebuhr and Ranke she knows the histories,
And by way of amusement likes Hoffman's mysteries,
Then, beside her study of German lore,
She o'er German lambs-wool oft will pore,
And, as she is truly a busy bee,
And versed in the works of Cornelia Mee,

To see her patterns is quite a treat,
For her honeycomb stitch has e'en Lambert beat,
And in wax work such wonderful things she has made,
That poor Madame Tussaud is thrown into shade.

Now, habits like these are so greatly opposed
To the facts your highness has just disclosed,
That what I've long thought, I still opine,
And should deem the idea must e'en be thine—
That there is nothing so rare, existent,
As creature of female kind consistent."

Thus spake the Fly, like a satirist bold,
Who, having such sentiment, plainly averred it,
Though to little avail, for, if truth must be told,
In reverie lost, the Prince had not heard it.

END OF FYTTE THE SECOND.

FYTTE THE THIRD.

READER, perhaps I am rather digressive ;
I try to amend, but, somehow, I can't,
Yet, should my tale be too slowly progressive,
Indulgence accustomed you surely will grant ;
For think—to describe, what an effort oppressive !
The ardour of love in the frame of an Ant !
Some consider that passion a sacred flame,
But for me to pronounce would be far too
presuming ;
Still, from what little twinge I have had of *that same*,
I can venture to say it is mighty consuming.
Of course you're acquainted with natural history,
Where there's much that is clear, and more that is
mystery,
And therefore you know that insects can bite,
Can entrap one another, can quarrel, can fight,

E'en unto death; then, why the thought spurn,
That if fiercely they fight, they as fiercely may
burn?

However, to prove it no pains I'll bestow,
For what I assert, I with certainty know.
Have I not seen, in a trance mesmeric,
An insect you wot of, in fits hysteric?
Have I not seen?—But thus to anticipate
Is, to my story, in some sort perfidious,
Though, when knowledge is rare, we are often precipitate,
And reveal it unwisely, from self love insidious.

But to resume:
In bonnet and plume
The Prince with his friend is once more seated;
And his highness is somewhat better;
For the Fly has advised, nay more, entreated
That he, to the Queen, would write a letter.
Wherein his suit he may warmly press,
And implore her at once to decide his fate;
“For refusal,” says Fly, “can't be greater distress
Than thus in suspense protracted to wait.

One gleam of hope there seems to be,
Which I mention to comfort and not to delude thee ;
Her artful return to thy favourite tree
Was a pretext of love that could scarcely elude me.
I dare not predict that thou'lt not be rejected,
But, on trifles as light, hopes often are built,
And, if such be the case, oh ! be not dejected,
For what can she be, but an absolute jilt !”
“ Thy affections hast thou then been able to master
Through life ?” said the Prince, with tone emphatic :
“ Why no,” said the Fly, “ it has been my disaster
That what I have felt have been chiefly rheumatic.”
But the hint, to the Prince, had courage imparted,
Who promptly becoming almost light-hearted,
Prepared for the effort of writing :
When, in sooth, it was pretty and droll to see
His pens and his ink and his papeterie,
For love-letters truly inviting.

Of a humming bird's feather the pen was made,
And a nut-shell, the tiniest, held the ink,
And, for paper, a quire of white rose leaves was laid,
With wax o' the bee, as ye well may think.

A small signet ring, moreover was there,
And all was perfumed with finest rose-otto,
The device was a wee little hive, I declare,
And "Je voudrais y être," was the motto.
Now, when they were ready, these implements fine,
The Prince sighed, as if something ailed him,
And to send the epistle seemed nigh to decline,
For he freely confessed his heart failed him.
Adding—"My passion to write would methinks be
a blunder,
For though I could sing it, or read it, or tell it,
I own to thee, friend, what may well make thee
wonder,
That nothing on earth could e'er teach me to
spell it."
Here the marvelling Fly oped his queer 'little eye';*
Nay in utter surprise he stretched wide the twain,
But when his amazement the Prince seemed to spy,
With a very great effort he closed them again :
Saying gravely—"To spell is so humble an art

* "I," said the Fly,

"With my little eye." *Cock Robin.*

That insects of genius seldom acquire it,
For to think of the eye, while addressing the heart,
Is such trouble, a pedant alone could require it.”
To the Prince ’twas contentment too cheering to name,
To hear something like praise, when he justly
feared blame ;
So he pondered awhile, as if deeply thinking,
Commenced knitting his brows and his eyelids
blinking,
Then mended his pen, and said—“ Let me see—
’Twere best to begin with a bouncing B.”

The Prince writes.

“ B of beauty ! B superfine !
Be but less cold to me, be but B mine,
And thou’lt be of all B’s the B most divine.
Be but willing to cure one thou’st been nigh to kill,
And pity the pains Love through me is twitching ;
Then in death as in life, thou wilt be worshiped still,
For I’m as B witched, as thou art B witching.

An answer of kindness O B loved grant,
To comfort the heart of thy faithful

ANT.”

As the spelling was hidden by writing convenient,
 'Twas really a task to decipher the scrawl,
And if faults should remain, good reader, be lenient,
 For 'mid so many words, well may wrong letters
 fall,

When the writer, poor soul ! did A B C (*a Bee see*)
 in all.

Now the billet was sealed with the signet ring,
 And the Fly undertook to bear it,
So he carefully fastened it under his wing,
 That nothing might sully or tear it.

Then, not without sadness, he wended his way,
 As success in his mission was dubious;
For, in case of her Majesty uttering "nay"
 The effect might be truly lugubrious.

And although our Fly was given to mirth,
 And, by nature, sarcastic and witty,
'Twas the best little insect that e'er crawled on earth,

 And ' his soul was disturbed with pity !'
For he thought, " If this heart, so free, I can't steel
 From fear and misgivings tremendous,
Ah me ! what torture his highness must feel
 In a crisis so truly stupendous !"

Thus in sight of the hive, you would judge, from
his air,

That his bosom was torn by hooks called tenter ;
For so nervous and trembling was he when there,
That he paused, like ourselves, before he could
enter.

END OF FYTTE THE THIRD.

FYTTE THE FOURTH.

THE hive!—I wish ye had been there to see
The beautiful dome in which dwelt the Bee.
Though rustic, its outline was graceful and bold,
And with ribs 'twas inwrought of the colour of gold.
It lay warm to the sun, yet protected from show'rs,
And the fresh earth beneath it was glowing with
flow'rs;
The myrtle, the orange, and tuberos rare,
And the violet humble and wild thyme were there,
With roses, and jasmine, and reseda sweet,
And blossoms which elsewhere ye seldom may meet.
There were glistening insects, with low drowsy sound,
And the gayest of butterflies fluttered around.
Then anear this charmed spot, tall trees were growing,
Whose foliage quite a sweet contrast made
With the flow'rs underneath, so gorgeously blowing,
Now dazzling in sunshine, now hidden in shade.

Oh! a charm beyond words there has e'er been to me,
In the branches sunlit of a goodly tree,
When, arching on high in their full summer hue,
They seem gazing entranced on the heaven's pure
blue,

Or when, gently stirred by the balmy air,
They rouse up the singing birds nestled there.

Ah! well might the rivulet murmuring by,
O'er its course fleet and varied seem to sigh,
As if 'twere a grief ever onward to flow
Through brief scenes of beauty to drear wastes of wo.

But the stream of my thought—just o'erflowed like
the Nile—

Its due course must keep, forced by impulses spite-
ful;
And though outside the hive it has lingered awhile,
It must now enter in, to view scenes less delightful.

Now just look at the Fly
Coming limping nigh,

For his journey has somewhat tired him ;
While the bees at the door
Their fanning give o'er
And stare as if they admired him.
A moment he stops, his breath to gain,
And says to himself—" This weakness won't do,
These senseless fears I must try to restrain
And up to the point my courage to screw."
Then over his head his forelegs he twirled,
To brush away semblance of travel or dust,
And with the wit of a fly who has mixed in the world,
Thought he'd go in with grace, since do so he must.
So, with gesture superb, to the entrance he went,
Addressing these words to the sentinel there ;
" By the Prince of the Ants to the Queen I am sent,
And straight from his highness a missive I bear."

Down to the earth bowed the sentinel gracious,
And forth stepped the guards our herald to guide,
Who traversing corridors, halls and courts spacious,
Into the presence expected to glide.

But among the attendants arose a debating

Whether 'twere etiquette further to go,

When having appealed to an old drone in waiting,

He gravely replied, "Most certainly no,"

And begged that the Fly to him would confide

The note, which he'd give with loyalty true.

But the spirited Fly retorted with pride,

"Though I'm greatly obliged, I'll be whipped if
I do.

I myself will present it—regret to be rude—

Yet such is my promise and I mean to heed it ;

That duty performed, no more I'll intrude,

But wait till her Majesty pleases to read it."

In this speech there was doubtless much to humiliate,

And umbrage it gave to the courtly drone ;

Yet as in concluding it seemed to conciliate,

He led the Fly graciously up to the Throne.

Now the Presence effulgent, describe I would fain,

Its beauty, its glory, and regal state,

But my sight was so dazzled, I scarcely saw plain,

And therefore particulars cannot relate.

Still, it was something quite wondrous to see .

The grandeur of Majesty shine so transcendent,
That, awe-struck, the Fly sank down on his knee,
And presented the page on which so much was
pendent.

The eye of the Queen had a strange glance destructive,
A mystical union of softness and fire,
And the tone of her voice was truly seductive,
When the billet she took, and said—"You may
retire."

This permission of course the Fly obeyed,
And into an anteroom humbly withdrew,
But in it a very short time he had staid,
Before to the Throne he was summoned anew.
"Approach," said her Majesty, much less imperious,
With look condescending, half smiling, half serious,
"Sir Fly, pray approach, for I well apprehend
Of the Prince you are not only herald but friend;
And while I confess myself rather amused
By the letter which I have this moment perused,
In giving my autograph into your care
Good will to his highness I freely declare."

“ Good will,” said the Fly, “ ah Madam ! no more?”

For her accent and smile made him tremble all o’er,
And though he had tried to behave with sobriety,
He, by them, was frightened quite out of propriety,
And cried—“ If thy answer should be a denial,
Thy lover august won’t survive the trial,
Or, even if life for a time be prolonged,
Grief and despair—for methinks he is wronged—
Will certainly drive him out of his mind.”—

“ That,” said her Majesty, “ I have some doubt of,
For from all I have seen, I really can’t find
That his Highness has aught like a mind to go out
of.”

“ Is there no hope then, O Queen severe?

May time not induce thee thy humour to change?
He has beauty to win, and worth to endear,
And many a hymen has been more strange.”

“ In discussion I will not myself involve,

And beg that his suit you’ll cease from urging ;
For, all things considered, I’m firmly resolved
To reign like Queen Bess, unfettered and virgin.”

I wish ye had seen the Fly's gesture of wonder—

A wonder 'twould be if I could depict it—

When bursting restraints of decorum asunder,

He exclaimed—"As for that, Madam, facts contradict it."

From the eyes of the Queen flashed wildly the fire,

And her aspect became truly waspish with ire,

As she said—"If I were not without my sting,

I'd with it transfix thee, thou insolent thing."

Then, "Up, Guards, and at him!" she loudly
cried,

And lo! in a twinkling they flew to her side;

And secured in her presence the impudent Fly,

Who had dared to give Majesty thus the lie.

"Away," she continued, "the miscreant drive,

But as he has charge of our royal letter,

Have forbearance sufficient to leave him alive,

And in future I doubt not he'll bear himself better."

On the instant the terrified Fly is surrounded—

No chance of escape—he's o'erpower'd, confounded.

Fiercely they seize him,

Pommel and squeeze him;

Oh! the hurrying,
Worrying, skurrying,
The beating,
Maltreating,
The screeching,
Beseeching,
The rushing,
The crushing,
From all sides running,
Clamour stunning!
Shrieks of "Intrusion!"—
Horrid confusion!
On went the scouting,
Loud voices shouting,
"As we can't use our stings
Let's pull off his wings;
When he hies to his master
He'll trot all the faster."

Never was victim more rudely molested,
Quite gone were his wits, fast going his breath,
When a voice from the Queen the fury arrested,
And saved him from being just frightened to death.

“ I am sent from the Throne,”
Said a merciful drone,
“ To command that the Fly be tormented no more,
So let him go hence
Not bereft of all sense,
But ‘sadder and wiser’ than he was before.”

Her Majesty’s orders were promptly obeyed,
And as bees are renowned for transitions of feeling,
Their fury was not merely checked and allayed,
But emotions of pity came over them stealing.
Sighs of compassion replaced shouts of scorn,
To his bruised body they unguents applied,
Smoothing the wings they fain would have torn,
And supporting his steps—a bee on each side.
A cordial they gave him of royal honey,
Which for his senses such marvels effected,
That, could mortals but buy a like nostrum for
money,
All pharmacy else would be wholly neglected.
To the portal they hurried the culprit along,
While a drone who appeared the cortège to be
leading,

Said, " Sir Fly, when such worthies you next come
among,

"Twould be wise to attend to the rules of good
breeding."

Cried the Fly—" I'm obliged for your drugs and
attention,

And feel myself vastly the better for taking them,
But, if good folks heal wounds, allow me to mention,
'Tis only the wicked who e'er think of making
them."

Then, waving the autograph over his head,

He gallantly bowed on quitting the hive ;
And back to his master he rapidly sped,
Thankful to 'scape from the rude bees alive.

END OF FYTTE THE FOURTH.

FYTTE THE FIFTH.

I HAVE lauded the fragrance of chesnut and lime,
Although oft inducing faintness and coma;
I have talked of the myrtle and low mountain thyme,
With its weaker but far more refreshing aroma.
Sweet is the odour of eglantine wild,
Sweeter the woodbine and May-blossom fair,
But there is a smell more subtle, more mild,
More exquisite still—the delicious fresh air.
If thou have lain on a sufferer's bed,
Or ever have lingered in crowded hall,
Though odours the finest were round thee shed,
Hast thou not often, with longing sighs, said,
“One breath of fresh air is worth them all!”
And once more to roam o'er the heathery glen,
When the bright morning sun cheers all things
beneath it;
To feel the soft breeze fan our pale brow again,
Oh! then is the time that 'tis heaven to breathe it!

Thus it was rapture the pure air to sniff,
After the atmosphere close, of the hive,
And although the Fly's limbs were rather stiff,
The freshening breeze made his vigour revive.
At first he in absolute ecstasy flew,
Forgetting his mission and recent disaster;
But objects familiar his troubles renew,
And bring back his thoughts to his royal master.
Alas! when afflictions over us hang,
Though all things around may to gladness tend,
There exists no charm to avert the pang
Which we feel must soon our brief pleasure end.
Thus the missive he bore seemed like a weight
To the heart of the Fly, as well as the wing;
For he feared that when he presented his freight,
The sadness of death to his friend 'twould bring.
O'er the Prince's mind stole the gloom of night,
And, could fear destroy, it sure had killed him;
As it was, I think he'd have died outright,
Had not a dose of morphia stilled him.

Its soothing spell is past—once more
Suspense his aching heart is trying,

His eyes with anxious glance explore
The route o'er which his friend is flying.
That faithful form he soon perceives,
And views with dread his flight unsteady,
No room for hope such movement leaves ;
He trembles at the sight already.
Few words the friends exchange on meeting,
For sorrow little parlance needs,
And quick the royal heart is beating,
While the proud lines transcribed he reads.

“ No more, O Prince, can we be permitting
Thy hapless flame,
And of what in our conduct has been unwitting,
We own the blame ;
When a fire burns brightest 'tis most near the
fitting—
Be thy love the same !
An Ant for Prince Consort is too un B fitting
Even to name.
Thine, royal and free,
Apia, the B.”

O reader ! despair is a fearful thing,
But was it ever thy doom to feel it ?
Did a pang like death e'er thy bosom wring,
And nor shriek, nor tear, nor sigh reveal it ?
Then know'st thou a shock which may pierce the
core
Of the heart which by it is struck and riven ;
Then has thy spirit said, " All is o'er,"
In a voice which blood from thy heart has driven.
If e'er thou have felt this pang supreme,
And if thou have had the luck to recover,
Something perchance thou may'st faintly dream
Of the anguish these lines gave the royal lover.
No tear from his princely eyes he brushed,
Perhaps, had he wept, he had borne it better ;
But, as by the letter his hopes were crushed,
Of course his highness crushed the letter.
Then o'er him pass'd a shudder slight,
As is usual in deep emotion,
And down he fell, to the Fly's affright,
Who of such ways had little notion.

With tender care his friend he raised,
And water on his face he threw,
And, though he deemed his brains were crazed,
Used every simple aid he knew.
Then, as the Prince's swoon subsided,
It was a curious thing to see
The Fly between two moods divided,
Love for the Prince, hate for the Bee.
For her his rage he sternly muttered
In terms much less polite than clear,
While to his royal friend he uttered
Words to invigorate and cheer.
" O Prince, revive, throw off the yoke
Which thus has paralysed thy frame ;
What ! die, to be a Queen Bee's joke !
Die, to incur a nation's blame !
Think of the valiant deeds you've done,
Worthy a warrior brave and bold ;
Think of the laurels you have won,
Worthy the great Black Prince of old.
Can he by weakness be subdued
Who once so nobly faced the foe ?

Can he whose prowess foes have rued,
Succumb beneath a female blow ?
Rather than I would sink supine,
I swear by my forefather's bones,
In fight I'd win and make her mine,
And teach my slaves to beat her drones."
But, little strength these words impart,
For when did lovers reason mind ?
As useful 'tis to stricken heart,
As spectacles worn by the blind.
Nor sighs nor tears could aught avail,
Scarce to the royal ear they go,
For fast his strength and senses fail,
While the Prince murmurs faint and slow :
" No tear o'er my lorn spirit shed,
For can we flee from wo too soon ?
I've heard that peace is with the dead,
And gladly do I seek the boon.
Each idle wish already fades,
Fades the vain thought of love and Bee,
But, one regret my heart pervades,
'Tis, faithful friend, to part with thee.

Ah! grieve me not with plaint or sigh,
But carefully my body bear,
And with it to the rose tree hie,
For I would fain be buried there.”
Then with a dim yet tender gaze
On his poor friend, the Prince expired ;
And weeping sore, the Fly straightways
Did all that he had been desired.
Gently he bore his precious trust,
Tears meanwhile falling in a stream,
But, ere he laid it in the dust,
He sat beside the tree to dream.
To ponder on the force of love,
And thank his stars that he'd escaped it,
Confessing it a power above
All that his fancy e'er had shaped it.
Like sculptured effigy of wo
He sat, until, with sudden start aghast,
He saw, as swift as shaft from bow,
A beauteous form dart frantic past.
Apia it was, the haughty Queen,
Whose spirit contrite thoughts had riven.

Drawn hither with intent, I ween,
To heal the cruel wound she'd given.
With softened heart she fondly flew
Unto the well remembered spray,
But cold as any stone she grew—
For there in death her lover lay.
Oh! piercing was the shriek she gave,
As if all wo condensed were in it;
Remorse—but all too late to save—
A pang to kill one in a minute.
On his loved form herself she threw,
And, with a low despairing groan,
Forth from his heart the sting she drew,
And plunged it wildly in her own.

Alas! the poor Fly's nerves were shaken,
And this last shock was deep and stunning.
But grief could not his master waken,
Nor tears, though they till night were running.
“Have not extremes the same fate oft?”
He said, with all his usual terseness,
“The Prince is dead from heart too soft,
The Queen, from very great perverseness.”

Still, lingering near, awhile he staid,
As if nought else on earth he heeded;
Then wandered forth, and justly said,
“ My presence now is no more needed.”

THE END.





* BOUND BY 29
...INTL EDNA.

